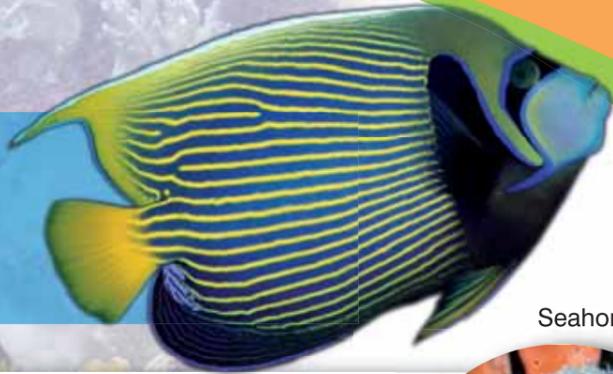


yesterday, today and tomorrow

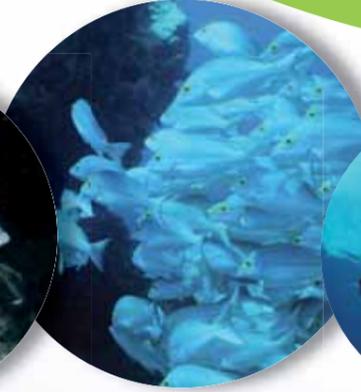
Learning about the past, looking to the future

REEF Beat 2

Fish



Seahorse



Coral Cod

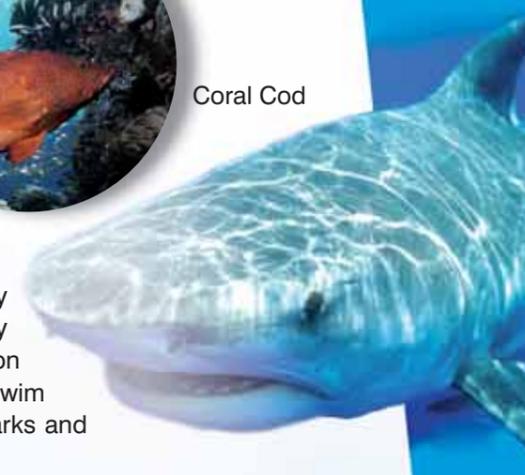
Creature Features

- There are more than 1500 species of fish that live in the Great Barrier Reef
- Their skeleton is made of bone
- They have one gill opening on each side of their head
- Most have a swim bladder to keep them afloat
- Most reproduce through external fertilisation (known as spawning)
- When fish eggs hatch, baby fish are on their own and they know instinctively how to swim and find food
- Some male fish carry the babies and give birth, such as the seahorse
- Reef fish use their colours to hide from predators and sneak up on prey; some reef fish can change their colour patterns to suit the colour of the surface they are resting on
- The ocean sunfish is the largest bony fish growing over three metres in diameter and weighing over two tonnes.

Fabulous Fish

Although sharks and rays are technically fish they are considered to be slightly different because they have a skeleton made of cartilage and do not have a swim bladder, but we will talk more about sharks and rays in poster number eight.

Because there are so many different types of fish found on the Great Barrier Reef many have adapted to eat almost all available food ranging from algae to other fish. The fish living in the Great Barrier Reef come in many shapes and a kaleidoscope of colours, this is one of the reasons why the Great Barrier Reef is so famous. As a seabird I really love to catch and eat fish, and I know many people also love to catch fish. The main thing is that we make sure that there will always be enough fish for people, and seabirds of course, to catch in the future.



A day fishing in 1954...



I would now like to introduce you to my friend John Frisch. He is going to tell you what it was like when he went fishing in the Great Barrier Reef more than 50 years ago...

"Back in 1954 when I was just a young lad, my father and I would head out fishing almost every weekend. Back in those days there was no need to take the boat out hundreds of miles, as the Reef was virtually untouched and the fish were in abundance. When you were out on the water you were lucky to see another boat out there. My father and I would normally put two lines in, and by the time we had put the second line in there was something on our first line. I remember once my uncle caught a 320-kilogram groper! There never used to be legal size and possession limits on fish as there was just stacks of fish to catch."

Goby



Sunfish

John Frisch still going fishing today...

Well John and I have both been around a long time and we have seen how fishing technologies have changed over the last 50 years. It's a completely different scene for John out on the water today; let's hear his story...

"I got my first speed boat in 1964 and at that time there were only nine other boats registered in the area. Today there are more boats in my street than there were in the whole district in the 1960s. Today I have a boat that goes faster and further than ever before and onboard I have a GPS (Global Positioning System) that lets me know exactly where I am and a fish finder that tells me exactly where the fish are. When I head out in my boat I see other boats everywhere and they are all using their GPS to map out the area and mark the good fishing spots. The fish aren't as abundant as they used to be but because I have the latest in technology I can still manage to catch some fish. All of these advances in technology are advantages for fishers but not for the fish. There just never used to be this much pressure on fish stocks before."

Top speed

Sailfish	109km/h
Bluefin tuna	100km/h
Swordfish	90km/h
Marlin	80km/h
Flying fish	56km/h
Barracuda	43km/h
Mackerel	33km/h

What's being done to protect fish stocks?

Due to the pressure on fish stocks today government agencies are working to ensure there will be still be plenty of fish left to catch in the future. There are now size limits on the fish you can take and bag limits on the number of fish an individual can catch and keep. To help conserve the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and improve fish stocks certain sections (known as zones) have been closed to fishing all together. It is really important to take a zoning map with you when go fishing in the Marine Park, so you know where you are and what you can do!



Australian Government
Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority
www.gbrmpa.gov.au

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